

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 163910

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TO AMEMBASSY SANAA IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY LONDON

S E C R E T STATE 163910

EXDIS

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: YE, YS, MOPS, PINR, MASS, MCAP, PINT, PINS

SUBJECT: EVALUATION CURRENT PDRY THREAT TO YAR

REF: A) SANAA 1514, B) SANAA 1448, C) SANAA 1477, D) JIDDA

4275, E) LONDON 9326, F) STATE 152967

KUWAIT PASS MUSCAT

1. SUMMARY: DEPARTMENT AND INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY CONSENSUS IS THAT PDRY POSES NO REPEAT NO INCREASED CONVENTIONAL MILITARY THREAT AGAINST YAR AT THIS TIME. ALL REPORTS OF PDRY INTENT TO INITIATE MAJOR HOSTILITIES AGAINST YAR SEEM TO EMANATE FROM YAR ITSELF. BORDER SKIRMISHES AND CONTINUED FACTIONAL STRIFE BOTH SIDES OF BORDER MAY CONTINUE. RECENT PDRY TROOP AND EQUIPMENT MOVEMENTS PROBABLY TRIGGERED BY UNCERTAINTY CONCERNING INTENTIONS OF NEW YAR REGIME. NEVERTHELESS, USG CONTINUES TO SUPPORT STRENGTHENING OF YAR MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT AND CONSOLI-

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 163910

DATION OF NEW REGIME. US IS ACCORDINGLY EXPEDITING SHORT-

TERM MILITARY SHIPMENTS. RESPONSE TO LONG-TERM REQUIREMENTS IS BEING EXPEDITED.

2. YOU MAY REVIEW PDRY-YAR MILITARY SITUATION WITH COLONEL AL-HAMDI, AND DRAW UPON THE FOLLOWING:

A) IN RESPONSE TO THE REQUEST OF THE YAR, WE HAVE CONDUCTED A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE SITUATION, DRAWING UPON ALL THE RESOURCES OF THE US INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY. WE HAVE ALSO TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT THE VIEWS OF OTHER FRIENDLY GOVERNMENTS.

B) IN GENERAL, OUR ANALYSIS OF THE SITUATION IS THAT THERE HAVE INDEED BEEN MOVEMENTS BY PDRY FORCES IN THE PDRY-YAR BORDER AREA, PARTICULARLY NEAR BAB AL-MANDAB, SINCE YAR CHANGE IN GOVERNMENT IN JUNE. YARG MAY BE OVERESTIMATING SIGNIFICANCE OF THESE MOVES. THEY MAY BE LARGELY ATTRIBUTABLE TO PDRY APPREHENSIONS CONCERNING NEW YAR REGIME AND POSSIBLE PDRY INTEREST IN SHORT-TERM, LOCALIZED PROFIT FROM REAL OR IMAGINED INTERNAL DIVISIONS IN YAR. WE FIND NO EVIDENCE THAT THE PDRY IS PLANNING A MAJOR ATTACK AGAINST THE YAR.

C) WE SEE NUMBER OF FACTORS INHIBITING PDRY UNDERTAKING MAJOR MILITARY OPERATIONS AGAINST YAR AT THIS TIME:

1) WHILE PDRY FORCES SUPERIOR TO YAR, THEY STILL LACK LOGISTIC CAPABILITY TO SUSTAIN MAJOR ATTACK FOR MORE THAN A FEW DAYS OR WEEKS AT MOST. PDRY THUS COULD NOT PURSUE A COMPREHENSIVE OFFENSIVE STRATEGY.

2) MAJOR PDRY OPERATIONS AGAINST YAR COULD INCITE LATENT TRIBAL HOSTILITIES IN AREA. THIS WOULD NOT BE IN PDRY INTEREST.

3) ECONOMIC HARDSHIPS AND INTERNAL POLITICAL DISSENTION IN PDRY BODE ILL FOR EFFECTIVENESS OF ANY SUSTAINED EFFORT AGAINST YAR, ALTHOUGH FOR THESE SAME REASONS PDRY MAY PERCEIVE INTEREST IN MAINTAINING, EVEN EXACERBATING, BORDER TENSIONS.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 163910

4) PDRY APPEARS TO BE MEETING LITTLE SUCCESS IN ITS FOMENTATION OF DHOFAR REBELLION IN OMAN. IRANIAN CONTINGENT HAS STRENGTHENED CAMPAIGN IN OMAN AGAINST REBELS, AND THERE ARE SIGNS OF INCREASED INTEREST IN SUPPORT OF OMAN BY OTHER ARAB STATES. INCREASED OMANI OIL REVENUES (PERHAPS US \$800 MILLION THIS YEAR) OPEN PROSPECT OF STILL FURTHER STRENGTHENING OF SULTAN'S POSITION, BOTH

POLITICALLY AND MILITARILY.

5) PDRY INTEREST IN REESTABLISHING ADEN AS ENTREPOT WHEN SUEZ CANAL REOPENED AND PDRY INTEREST GENERALLY IN INCREASED COMMERCIAL CONTACT WITH AND AID FROM NON-COMMUNIST COUNTRIES INDICATE PDRY MAY PERCEIVE OWN ADVANTAGE IN PURSUING MODERATE FOREIGN POLICY, DESPITE RADICAL DOMESTIC POLITICAL STRUCTURE.

6) SYMPATHY AND SUPPORT BY OTHER ARAB COUNTRIES FOR YAR PERPETUATES PDRY ISOLATION, WHILE POSSIBILITY OF ARAB FINANCIAL AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE MAY INDUCE PDRY MODERATION.

7) PDRY HAS XENOPHOBIC FEAR OF SAUDI ARABIA, AND SAUDI SUPPORT FOR YAR IS IN OUR VIEW SIGNIFICANT DETERRENT TO PDRY'S EMBARKING ON OFFENSIVE MILITARY OPERATIONS AGAINST YAR.

D) IN SHORT, CONVENTIONAL PDRY OPERATIONS AGAINST YAR ARE FRAUGHT WITH NUMEROUS RISKS AND WITH LITTLE APPARENT PROSPECT OF SUCCESS. AT SAME TIME, WE NOTE INCREASED REPORTS SINCE EARLIER THIS YEAR OF GUERRILLA-STYLE ACTIVITIES AGAINST YAR EMANATING FROM PDRY AND REPORT OF SOVIET ADVICE TO PDRY TO CONCENTRATE ON SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES IN YAR (AND OMAN) RATHER THAN ON PREPARING FOR A MAJOR CONVENTIONAL OPERATION. THIS APPROACH IS MORE CONSISTENT WITH BASIC NF DOCTRINE.

E) US APPROACH TO ARMS SUPPORT: DESPITE FOREGOING ASSESSMENT OF LACK OF ANY UNUSUAL PDRY THREAT AT THIS TIME, USG CONTINUES TO SUPPORT STRENGTHENING OF YAR MILITARY FORCES, BOTH IN SHORT RUN AND LONG RUN, IN A
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 STATE 163910

REGIONAL CONTEXT. WE SUPPORT THIS ON ITS OWN MERITS, IN VIEW OF RENEWED STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF AREA ONCE SUEZ CANAL IS REOPENED, AND OUR ESTABLISHED POLICY OF SUPPORTING STRONG AND STABLE YAR.

3. THE FOLLOWING ADDITIONAL POINTS ARE PROVIDED FOR THE EMBASSY'S INFORMATION ONLY: A) WE BELIEVE THAT COLONEL AL-HAMDI'S INTEREST IN STRENGTHENING HIS REGIME INTERNALLY (SEE, IN ADDITION TO EMBASSY'S REPORTS, LONDON 08831), BOTH THROUGH INCREASED ARMS AND THROUGH DEMONSTRATION OF US AND OTHER FOREIGN SUPPORT, MAY IN PART EXPLAIN HIS EXPRESSED CONCERNS OVER PDRY INTENTIONS, AND HIS SHORT-TERM REQUESTS FOR MILITARY ASSISTANCE. B) SHORT-TERM ARMS SHIPMENTS: YOU WILL BE RECEIVING SEPTTEL ON THIS EARLY NEXT WEEK. C) LONG-TERM SECURITY

ASSISTANCE PLANNING: WE ANTICIPATE THAT LONG-PROMISED
MESSAGE COMMENTING ON SAUDI PROPOSALS FOR LONG-TERM
SECURITY ASSISTANCE TO YAR AND CONTAINING OUR OWN
RECOMMENDATIONS WILL BE TRANSMITTED SHORTLY. INGERSOLL

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